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RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

40¢

VOL. 7 NO. 13
FIRST ISSUE OF
JULY 1977

- TO ALASKA ON CP RAIL
- METRO BLUE LINE OPENING

LETTERS

Glenn Lee implies (1st Jun issue) that the Union Pacific is being deliberately obstructive in imposing a 70mph limit on the PIONEER. I think it should be made clear that a similar restriction was in effect on the UP's own passenger runs in the late '60s. Is he really surprised that they adopt a "we'll believe it when we see it" attitude in response to Amtrak's claims?

Since a mile at 79mph takes only 5.86 seconds less than a mile at 70mph, it's clearly ridiculous to suppose that 90 minutes could be saved with the higher limit. A check of the timetables shows that 40 minutes may be theoretically possible, but 30 would be more realistic.

But whatever are we going to do about those malevolent dispatchers? Mr. Lee's train, encountering red-over-yellows at every turn, staggered out of Pendleton all of 8 minutes late. Three stops later they were on time, which no doubt gave rise to muttered curses in Albina.

Tim Zukas
Oakland, California

I was shocked to read that Amtrak is considering the discontinuance of the FLORIDIAN. In my opinion, this train is one of the key links in the Amtrak system, IF it is rerouted toserve several large Southern cities. With the exception of the NY-Florida trains, the FLORIDIAN is the only Amtrak train serving the Southeast. Even when this run is considered, the South remains sorely neglected by Amtrak. Already such cities as Mobile, Knoxville, Macon, Baton Rouge, and Chattanooga are without any rail passenger service. If the FLORIDIAN is dropped, Louisville, Nashville, Birmingham, and Montgomery will be added to this list, except for Birmingham's Southern service three days per week. Recent census figures show the South (and the Southwest) to be the fastest-growing region of the U.S. Population shifts may eventually make the "Sun Belt" as important as the Northeast in commerce and industry. For Amtrak to ignore an area like this would be detrimental not only to the rail corporation, but to the transportation, energy, and air quality needs of the entire country.

Thomas E. Hoffman, Jr.
Washington, D.C.

In the Tampa, St. Petersburg, Clearwater area of Florida, Amtrak runs NO advertising of any kind. With plans to remove the FLORIDIAN in the near future for lack of revenue, is it any wonder when an area with a potential one million riders gets no knowledge of any kind of Amtrak. St. Petersburg is the terminal of the FLORIDIAN, the SILVER STAR, and of course the CHAMPION, and has been for six years, yet there are residents here who know nothing about the Amtrak service, or that you can get out of Florida by train.

Russ Schwartz
Clearwater, Florida

The possibility that the FLORIDIAN will be dropped points out one of Amtrak's serious faults. There is no long-distance fare structure which allows utilizing alternate routings. We are forced to pay each separate segment when Amtrak's route is circuitous. Amtrak needs to set up fares that are based on direct distances on the long-distance trains. A properly coordinated and priced BROADWAY-Florida train setup could outperform the FLORIDIAN.

Robert T. Clark
Sanford, Florida

Rail Travel News, Vol. 7, No. 13 (Whole No. 157). First Issue of July, 1977.
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Published twice monthly by Message Media, P. O. Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Subscription $9.75 per year; single copy 40¢. Overseas and institutional rates on request. STAFF: Editor: James Russell. Editor-at-Large: Paul Rayton. Regional Correspondents: Peter Putnam Bretz, Los Angeles; Jack Ferry, Chicago; Kenneth Maylath, Baltimore; Peter Roehm, Boston.

ON THE COVER:

The abandoned "old wooden church" at Bennett, B.C., forms a partial backdrop for White Pass & Yukon tour train from Skagway, Alaska. Two engines couple to the antique cars preparatory to the two-hour return trip. In this issue Glenn Lee takes us far north on a CP Rail cruise ship to ride this train, look at CN's "Rupert Rocket," and survey the impressive glacial scenery of our biggest state. Photo by Glenn Lee.

CHANGEOVER AT AMTRAK OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

Putting an end to rumors that have circulated among railfans in recent weeks, Amtrak's head of operations, David A. Watts Jr., has asked to be removed from his position, according to Amtrak News. Watts wrote Amtrak President Reistrup: "I know that you have been seeking a chief operating officer to assume responsibility for all of Amtrak's operating functions--national operations, Northeast Corridor and operations support. It appears to me that this would be a logical time for me to step aside as head of national operations. This would give you and the new officer flexibility in reorganizing. It would also give me an opportunity to assume other duties." Amtrak's Board of Directors accepted Watts's request at its June 29 meeting. A new head of operations has not yet been appointed. In the interim, Robert Herman, VP-Operations, Northeast Corridor, has taken over the position, effective July 1. Mr. Reistrup said that there would be no other changes in operations staffing until a chief operating officer arrives. At that time, Mr. Herman will return to the Northeast Corridor position.

BLACKOUT, FLOOD WATERS DISRUPT TRAINS

The disastrous 25-hour power blackout that hit New York City the night of July 13 disrupted the electrified rail transportation in and around the city. The Northeast Corridor was partially knocked out by the power failure. An Amtrak spokesman said that altho power was flowing to catenary and signals were working, switches at New York could not be moved because their power source was gone. Amtrak ran trains as far as Newark and New Haven and bused passengers between those points. Some switches were arranged to take 10-car shuttle trains from New York to Newark and vice versa, but these trains did not run north of there. There was no rail traffic at all from New Haven to Penn Station for one day, and none into Grand Central Terminal for several days. The latter problem was caused by the breakdown of electric pumps which pump water from GCT's tunnels, and water rose in them to as much as 8 feet deep. Both New York stations were without lights. News reports said that about 1000 trapped commuters spent the night of the 13th in Penn Station. A sharp dispatcher was credited with getting most of the approximately 200 M[illegible] subway trains to stations before the system broke down, but seven trains with about 1000 riders were trapped between stations for several hours. Long Island and Westchester commuter lines were out.

Johnstown, PA, scene of a massive flood due to a burst dam in 1889, was flooded July 20 after an 8-hour rainfall that swelled the Conemaugh River to overflowing, killing at least 25 persons. Johnstown, between Pittsburgh and Harrisburg, is on the route of the BROADWAY LIMITED and the NATIONAL LIMITED. The storm put 33 miles of ConRail line out of commission, forcing the re-routing of the two Amtrak trains. Rail service was suspended to all the stops between Pittsburgh and Harrisburg. Starting July 22, Amtrak was running a coach-only BROADWAY between NY and Harrisburg, with buses from there to Pittsburgh, and a regular train Pittsburgh to Chicago. For the NATIONAL, the same arrangements prevailed, with the regular train running Pittsburgh to Kansas City. On July 21 Amtrak ran the NATIONAL in that fashion, but the BROADWAY, train 40, was detoured via the B&O to Cumberland and Washington, and from there passengers to NY used Northeast Corridor trains.

LATEST AMTRAK RIDERSHIP FIGURES

Below are the ridership figures most recently released by Amtrak, for March and April. See First April issue for previous data, for January and February.

LONG DISTANCE TRAINS

NOS.	TRAIN NAME	MAR	APR
	Florida Trains*	21,999	26,024
40-41	BROADWAY LIMITED	15,043	18,987
30-31	NATIONAL LIMITED	12,770	15,939
56-57	FLORIDIAN	11,103	13,642
58-59	PANAMA LIMITED	13,247	15,890
3-4	SOUTHWEST LIMITED	19,375	23,484
5-6	SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR	19,454	19,785
7-8	EMPIRE BUILDER	20,544	20,872
9-10	NORTH COAST HIAWATHA	10,946	12,413
15-16	LONE STAR	18,074	24,318
1-2	SUNSET LIMITED	6,777	8,930
50-51	JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY	8,356	10,776
54-55	MOUNTAINEER	5,436	5,127
60-61	MONTREALER**	27,235	32,231
11-14	COAST STARLIGHT	35,650	38,217
21-22	INTER-AMERICAN	3,012	3,865
68-69	ADIRONDACK	7,715	11,757
48-49	LAKE SHORE LIMITED	18,636	23,228
89-90	PALMETTO	9,371	15,189
166/7	COLONIAL	4,483	6,120
32-33	SHENANDOAH	3,265	5,693
	NY-LA thru car via KC	269	327
	First Class Total:	30,829	35,565
	Coach Class Total:	305,930	369,296
	Combined Total:	336,759	404,861

*Average of 3 trains. **Incl. NE Corr. psrs

SHORT DISTANCE TRAINS

ROUTE	MAR	APR
NYC - DC Metroliner	179,674	180,112
Northeast Corridor*	653,527	681,686
NYC - Harrisburg	20,531	19,854
Phila - Harrisburg	74,583	68,491
Springfield - New Haven	20,475	21,603
DC - Martinsburg	20,204	18,233
NYC - Albany - Buffalo	44,868	54,785
Chicago - St. Louis	20,770	24,705
Chicago - Milwaukee	21,058	24,496
Chicago - Detroit	24,280	32,449
Chicago - Carbondale	12,914	13,728
Chicago - Quincy	7,490	8,108
Los Angeles - San Diego	53,425	63,721
Seattle - Portland	13,036	13,628
Seattle - Vancouver	8,142	8,861
Chicago - Dubuque	2,846	3,058
Oakland - Bakersfield	6,478	9,791
Chicago - Port Huron	6,904	9,510
Jackson - Detroit	7,117	6,339
Minneapolis - Duluth	5,225	6,021
DC - Springfield thru car	1,709	1,983
First Class Total:	30,736	28,948
Coach Class Total:	1,174,620	1,242,214
Combined Total:	1,205,356	1,271,162
Special Trains:	5,520	13,457

*DC-NYC-Boston; & NYC-Springfield

BRITAIN TO CONTINUE BUS SUBSIDIES

The British Government's White Paper (see p. 5) has restored the 50% of the nation's bus subsidies that would have been cut if the proposal in the 1976 Green Paper had been retained. Rail and air's share of the passenger market has remained steady, while bus ridership declined at a 4% annual rate over the last 20 years, with private cars taking most of this declining share. A Leeds University group has shown that the bus subsidy cut could be made without loss of service if computers were used to schedule bus trips and cut drastically down on deadhead runs, thus saving up to 10% of current costs.

THE BRITISH WHITE PAPER ON TRANSPORTATION

by Roger Pritchard

The British Government's White Paper on Transport Policy, finally published June 27, marks the end of the consultative and the beginning of the legislative phase of a process started in 1974 by the Secretary of State for the Environment, who was then in charge of transport policy. Despite the intent of the 1968 Transport Act, there was then still no integrated and government-planned and regulated system that would, where politically possible, introduce economic realism into the transport field. The government was, and still is, subject to strong conflicting demands from road builders, the trucking industry, local government, various unions, auto manufacturing companies such as British Leyland and Chrysler, from British Rail, the National Bus Company, etc.

The Government's Green Paper on Transport Policy was published, after delay, in April, 1976. This Consultative Document was generally considered anti-rail. Figures used showed every household subsidizing transportation by £40, including rail £22, in 1975. British Rail (BR) had received, in 20 years, grants and capital writeoffs of over £3,000m. The current subsidy was over £400m, up from £75m. in 1970, for 8% passenger and 18% freight mileage--private autos taking 80% of passenger mileage. Wealthier people were using rail services and were subsidized to do so. When fares were raised 50% in 1975 after the 1972-4 price freeze, passenger traffic declined only 5%, so fares could still be raised. In short, the Green Paper proposed either drastic economies, substantial fare increases, cuts in service, or a combination of these.

In its July, 1976 response, "An Opportunity for Change," BR effectively countered the social-equity argument by referring to its new pricing policies, including a government subsidy for travel by the elderly, disabled, and blind; it met the high-cost argument by breaking down operations, demonstrating that the cost-accounting system was inadequate and proposing an interesting new one, agreeing to the end of subsidies for freight and Inter-City passenger services, while pointing out the social costs of phasing out, against other government policies, certain other subsidies and complaining of Government failure to set financial targets for road traffic; agreeing that up to 10% of its passenger services could be replaced by buses provided that they were integrated with rail services and that the National Bus Co. would withdraw from Inter-City competition; and generally counterattacking by pointing out that there was no long-term planning for transport policy proposed, even tho BR was conducting its own long-term studies because of the long lead time for investment in this heavy industry.

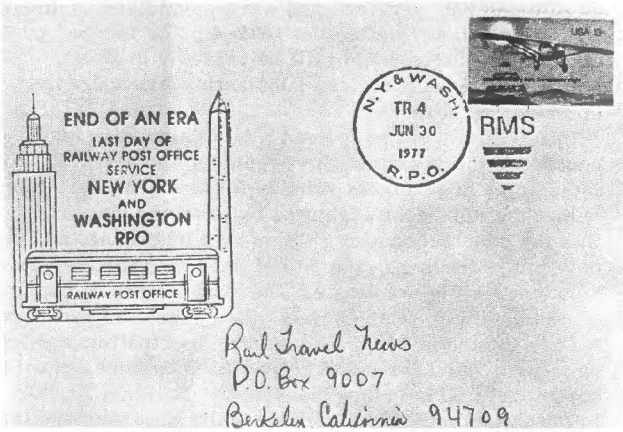
At the same time, BR was getting a new Board Chairman, Peter Parker, an old friend of the new Minister of the now-independent Dept. of Transport, William Rodgers. Parker, who is independently wealthy but committed to making the mixed economy work, has been altogether more aggressive than his predecessor and is considered by many to be BR's "last chance" to head off severe cutbacks. In his first Annual Report, for 1976, published May 1977, Parker asked from the upcoming White Paper a declaration of faith in the future of rail; recognition of its place in the industrial strategy; moves to lower net costs, increase productivity and sustain quality; a politically bipartisan approach to transport policy; greater flexibility for BR in balancing short and long term needs, central and local demands, and the requirements of BR's

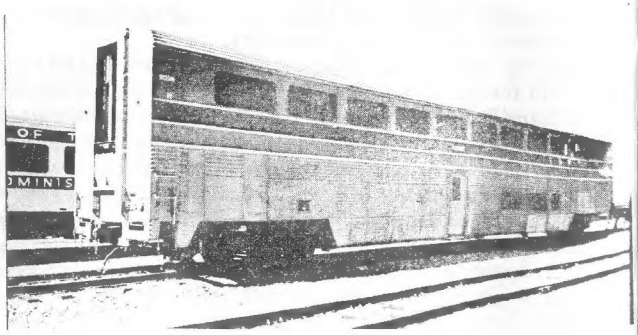
divisions--railways, shipping, hovercraft, property, hotels and catering, and exports; and creation of better data bases for predicting future transport needs, including development of a national data bank.

The recent White Paper responds to these demands by reducing the rail subsidy only slightly. No combination of fare increases, drastic economies and service cutbacks is now proposed. Removed or diluted are any demands for increased productivity, removal of London commuter subsidies by 1981, and granting Counties the right to close unprofitable branch lines. BR's Board and Chairman have been given the chance to make their own bed and lie in it, virtually within existing constraints. The one big omission in present policy is the freeway building program, now mostly complete. At the same time, the Prime Minister announced (in May) that rail investment, altho clearly needed, will be set at the same level for 4 years and then reviewed.

Peter Parker has accepted both the investment constraints and the White Paper. Thus BR will have to show on its own that it can keep prices competitive, improve productivity and somehow increase investment. Here it will be helped some by Government decisions: to replace loans for renewal of assets by grants, thus saving interest payments and with the aim of arriving at a single revenue/investment grant; to allow BR to invest and not return to the Government savings above projected losses in passenger business; to raise the subsidy for the elderly and handicapped; and to permit a rolling program of equipment replacement to reduce unit costs and stabilize the work force. Proposals by BR for a more realistic "avoidable cost" approach to accounting are also ready for study.

The last Railway Post Office car carried this specially-cacheted mail with the June 30 cancellation of Train 4, reading "N.Y. & Wash. R.P.O." Thanks to several readers who took the trouble to send us last-day covers of this historic event. See further details in Mixed Train of Thoughts. Try-again Dept.: Determined to get a good photo reproduction of the first new Amtrak bi-level coach to be sent into the outside world, we are printing again a reproduction of this slide taken under adverse lighting con ditions at the DOT's Boulder CO test center by Michael Davis. This is car #34002.





CARS & CONSISTS

*SUPER CONTINENTAL, CN train 1, lv Edmonton Jul 4: engines 6513 (A), 6612 (B), 6611 (B); cars 9670 bag, coaches 5611, 5471 (VIA), 5440, snack 756, coaches 5722, 5713 (VIA), 5728 (VIA), cafe 430, slprs "Entwistle," "Elmsdale," "Greenwood," dome lounge "Jasper," diner 1372, slprs "Evangeline," "Elderbank," "Everett," "Inwood."

*HILLTOPPER, train 34, Williamson WV Jul 14: engines N&W 825 (GP-9, off at Williamson), 700, 717 (P30's); cars Amcoach 21836, Amcafe 20050.

*Heart of Dixie RR Club excursion Birmingham-Chattanooga Jul 10 (SR except where noted): ex-T&P steam engine 610 & tender, SR water tank 52; cars 726, 907, 1041, 1039, 1036, 1043, 1042, 1034, HofD 2202 (ex-MP, ex-IC dome coach), 1069 "Missionary Ridge," HofD 4527, 1068, 1067, 3659, 1087, 1081, 1086, 1056 "Lookout Mountain."

*NATIONAL LIMITED has used these parlor cars as lounges in recent weeks: 3630 "Casimir Pulaski," 3632 "Henry Knox," 3634 "Johns Hopkins," 3644 "Nathan Hale."

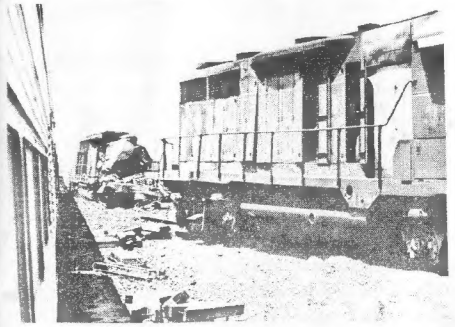
*FLORIDIAN, train 57 lv Chicago Jun 23: engine 440 (E in new striping, to Louisville); cars SP 6717, 5480, 3802, 5619, 8063, 2312 "Ft. Lauderdale," 1522.

*NIAGARA RAINBOW, train 63, NY Jul 1: engines 5033, 5031 (ConRail FL-9's); cars 1605 "Fairfield County," 8201 "BlueGrass Club," 6440, 6423, 3956, 6437,6419,6018.

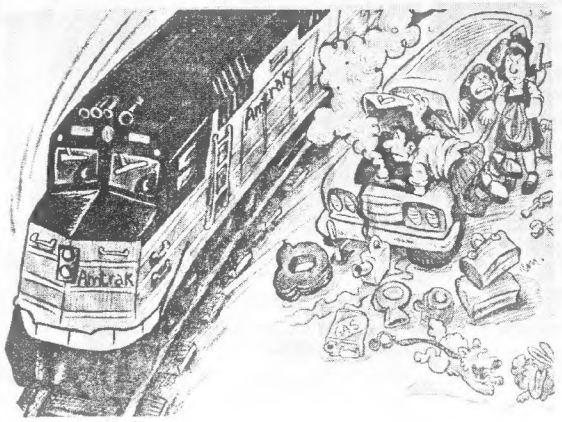
*Long Island RR scrap train, Blissville Yard-Corona Meadows Jun 22 (all LIRR): engines 224 (C420), 257 (GP38-2); cars 2065 "Mattinicock," 2079 "Shinnecock," 2068 "Merrick," 2050 "Mastic," 2066 "Mattituck" 2078 "Setauket," 2080 "Speonk."

*COAST STARLIGHT, train 14, Salem (?) Jul 2: engines 8461 (SP?), 616, 546; cars 1172, 1510, 5616, 5685, 4500, 4853, 8102, 4508, 4869, 4865, 4859, 4868, 4891, dome 9371, 8041, 2717 "Pine Fern," 2720 "Pine Gorge," 2216 "Indian Mesa," 4822 (19 cars)

*SUNSET LIMITED, train 1 New Orleans Jul 15: engines 617, 590; cars 1102, 9916, 9941, 9964, 9915, 4534, 4506, 3393, 8031, 2788 "Berkeley County," 2501"Blue Grove," SR "Seneca River," dome slpr observation 9253 "Silver Lookout."



A HEAD-ON CRASH of two Santa Fe freight trains on June 1 at Quirk, a railroad location near Laguna, 43 miles west of Albuquerque NM, which damaged 7 diesel engines but apparently caused no serious injuries, delayed the eastbound SOUTHWEST LIMITED for six hours at Albuquerque. When Ken Kielpinski traveled by the scene two days later on Amtrak train 4, he saw this scene of damaged blue-and-yellow Santa Fe freight engines alongside the track and photographed them from a vestibule.



At left is artwork from a current Amtrak ad, again emphasizing the theme of easier travel by rail than by automobile. This one appeared in a Virginia newspaper, and was headed: "Track down the Virginias without driving yourself crazy."

alaska via cp rail

by Glenn Lee

There is hardly a travel experience that can beat the 7 1/2-day trip from Vancouver, B.C. to Alaska and return--especially if that trip is made aboard "Princess Patricia," a CP Rail operation. CP has cruised to Alaska for longer than any other company--75 years--and even today "Princess Patricia" seems to carry the breath and pulse of the railway north to places where tracks cannot go.

My trip in May aboard Patricia was a dream come true. Since about the age of seven I had collected and memorized CP's Alaska schedule folders. And now on May 23 I found myself at the CP wharf in Vancouver, where Patricia lay moored at the outer edge. The ship was a beautiful sight, even as the rain began falling--perhaps to those for an eye to CP's marine arm evoking the same emotions as did the CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR or SHASTA DAYLIGHT when those two trains were receiving passengers at terminals.

The Princess is from almost exactly the same era as the CZ or SHASTA, her keel having been laid in Scotland in Nov., 1946, with her launching October 5, 1948. Her maiden voyage to Victoria from Scotland was May 10-June 3, 1949, and her entry into service on the Seattle-Victoria-Vancouver-Nanaimo run was June 15, 1949--almost precisely the time CZ and the SHASTA took to the rails.

An air of excitement built up among passengers who like myself had long read travel folders describing glaciers, high mountains, scenic views of long straits, narrow-gauge railways and fjords. With long blasts from the whistle, Patricia backed away at 8:35pm, while a small but attentive crowd watched and waved from shore. Lowering clouds threatened fog, and soon we were away, sliding quietly under the Lions Gate Bridge. Excitedly I paced the decks for an hour or two, then returned to my cabin after visiting the late buffet in the dining room and after standing at the bow for many long moments after midnight watching as we steamed into the rays of the setting moon.

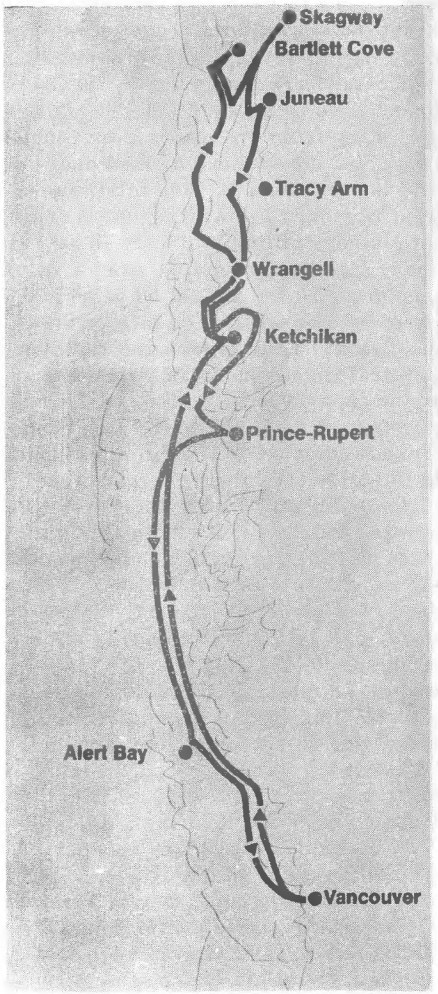
I awoke to a clear day, as large mountains covered with massive green trees slid by my porthole. A wonderful, delicious feeling, all of it! At 8:30am Alert Bay, a southbound port of call, slipped by, and by 9:30am we could easily feel the pulse of the sea, and the bow lifted ever higher to incoming swells from the Pacific as we reached the northern tip of Vancouver Island.

An hour later we were exposed to the open sea, crossing Queen Charlotte Sound. The sea had been very angry for a few weeks, and soon all aboard knew it, for Patricia was responding rapidly to the swells. Altho the rolls were not bad--about 5 degrees each way--it soon became difficult to walk around the ship, and the purser made a P.A. request that passengers remain seated while the ship was in open waters for the 2-hour crossing of the sound.

By noon the ship again sailed on flat waters, and would do so for the rest of the day, except for the crossing of Milbanke Sound where there was another 30-minute bout with the open sea.

The first day out is uninterrupted cruising thru the Inside Passage, with narrow channels, wide straits, waterfalls, hanging valleys and the like passing in profusion. The scenic wonders seem to grow as the day progresses. At 11:15pm it was still light in the northwest sky, as the Princess steamed northwest in Grenville Channel, a narrow fjord closely guarded by high peaks. It was dark at the tops of the peaks, but light at water level, and we seemed to be heading for a small round hole of light far from any human habitation. After a visit to the buffet, it was to bed, exhausted.

May 25: I had not noticed the ocean's pulse at 4am when the ship crossed Dixon Entrance, also exposed to the Pacific, and had moved into U.S. waters. We arrived at Ketchikan at 8:30am. It was NOT raining--an amazing state of affairs in one of the rainiest spots in Alaska! Ketchikan has been a "tough" place. I skipped the tour-bus trip for some walks around the "older" downtown area, and a ride on the city's transit bus. Departure from Ketchikan was 1:04pm--and then 5 1/2 hours of cruising thru crystal clear weather to Wrangell, Alaska.



Wrangell is a much smaller community of perhaps 2500 souls. As we arrived at 6:37pm, on the small pier to greet us were members of the city's school band and three young ladies in Klondike or "can-can" attire. Band greetings have been a tradition at Wrangell for many years. Departure was 8:47pm, with the sun still high above the horizon, and we steamed west for Wrangell Narrows, a restricted and confining passage thru which the larger cruise ships cannot pass. Indeed, the narrows is so shallow that at low tide the passage is closed to almost all commercial traffic. There was a large crowd on deck at 10:20pm as we entered the narrows from the south. Many stayed for over 90 minutes on deck as the ship went thru what is best described as a giant, slow-motion ski slalom on salt water, with 63 marker buoys to guide the captain and helmsman thru a channel perhaps only 250 or 350 ft. wide in places, and only 22 ft. deep, giving Patricia 16 ft. to spare at a fair tide.

We passed Petersburg at the north end of the channel at 11:55pm, noting that several lights were being flashed to recognize us. It was still light in the northwest sky. The scenery was as fantastic as ever, but one can take only so much, and so to bed as we steamed west in Frederick Sound en route to our rendezvous with the glaciers.

May 26: For many passengers, today will be the Big Day--the day spent cruising Glacier Bay, a very scenic part of the world where superlatives fall short of meaning. At 9am Patricia turns "left" from the north-south alignment of Chatham Strait and heads west into Icy Straight. From the turning point it's a 2 1/2-hour run to the entrance of Glacier Bay. Captain George Vancouver, who surveyed the

myriad of inlets and sounds between Olympia WA and Alaska in the late 1700s, named "Icy Straight" for the large amount of ice he found. He did not see Glacier Bay, as one large glacier extended for several miles along the north "shore" of Icy Straight, calving icebergs directly into the strait. Since Vancouver's visit, the glaciers have retreated 60 miles or more, providing a wide and smooth path for the cruise ships.

Ahead of Patricia is Mt. Fairweather, 15,320 feet and gleaming white. It is a crystal-clear day, with hardly a cloud in sight. After breakfast, passengers become more animated and begin crowding the decks. At 11:35am the ship swung north into Bartlett Cove, the southern extremity of Glacier Bay. At 12:15pm we stopped to pick up two young lady "naturalists" who would narrate the sights over the ship's P.A. There was a delay as members of the French CBC network utilized a U.S. speedboat to circle Patricia to shoot film for a CBC documentary about the ship and its cruise service.

Weather statistics indicate only about 12 days per year of clear weather, and this was one of them. It's no hurry for anybody during the day at Glacier Bay. This remote National Monument is to be savored carefully. By 3:20pm we were passing small icebergs, many from the active Muir Glacier. The mountains grew higher, more barren, and the scenery loomed ever more "super colossal" as we approached the terminus of Tarr Inlet, the end of navigable water. Students of the Great Northern Railway school of passenger-car naming will enjoy the largest glacier spilling into Tarr Inlet--the "Grand Pacific Glacier." Unlike many glaciers around the world, the Grand Pacific is advancing, and has been doing so for almost 50 years.

At 4:28pm we were within a half-mile of the two-mile-wide face of the Grand Pacific, and engines were set dead slow. Loud groans and rumbles could be heard from the Glacier, and several times chunks of ice broke loose, crashing melodramatically, but somehow in slow motion, to the salt water below. Very slowly Patricia steamed westerly to the face of the Margerie Glacier, which approaches Tarr Inlet at a 90° angle to the Grand Pacific. Like the latter, the Margerie is active, and many icefalls were observed, with thrilling and somehow frightening sound effects.

Now the engines were shut off entirely and Patricia was left to drift for almost an hour. The wheelhouse was thrown to "open house" and passengers thronged to the funnel deck to visit the ship's nerve center.

One of the engineering staff said he had been closely eyeballing the advancing Grand Pacific Glacier for 7 years, and said it was now only a few hundred yards from the Margerie Glacier's terminal, and guessed that the two would be joined at tidewater in about 18 months, about the fall of 1978--another step in gradual reclamation by the ice of former territory.

I must admit that the trip to Glacier Bay was so stunning and spectacular that I hesitate to write more about it. All the National Geographic articles, travelogue movies and Sierra Club books cannot do it justice.

Patricia was unable to enter Johns Hopkins Inlet due to heavy ice floes, and thus had more time in Tarr Inlet. At 5:47pm the spell was broken as the engines turned over slowly, to mark the beggining of our retreat. The day wound down slowly. We moved slowly into Icy Straight, and at 10:24pm the sun finally set. As we moved slowly eastward a delicious feeling came over me. Perhaps for only the third time in all my travels I had the feeling of being far out-and-behind the back-of-beyond, safely and in health. I had this feeling once in 1961 on the narrow gauge train between Chama NM and Durangeo CO; and again in 1971 on the CN's "Rupert Rocket" between Prince George and Terrace, B.C.

May 27: "Please don't leave the ship until after the train has been backed down on the dock" said the purser on the P.A. He indicated that labor

 (continued on page 15)

Urban-Suburban Transit

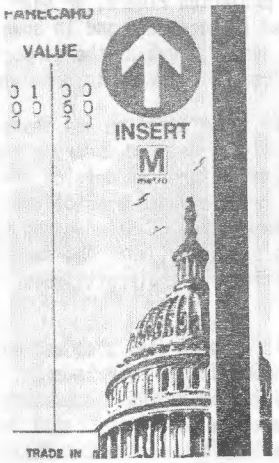
WASHINGTON METRO'S BLUE LINE OPENS

by Ken Maylath

It has been a fairly long time between opening of Metro segments in Washington --more than 15 months. As of July 1 the Metro became a system rather than a line, with the beginning of revenue service on the segment of the Blue Line from RFK Stadium thru downtown under the Potomac to Rosslyn, Virginia, then parallel the river via the Pentagon to National Airport--some 12 miles.

Things got rolling with a 6am ceremony--featuring senior citizens--at the Foggy Bottom station, and another observance around noon at L'Enfant Plaza. Yes, Amtrak employees now have the option of commuting to work via rapid transit.

I made the short walk from the Union Station waiting room to Red Line Metro station around 9:00. The commuter rush was over, with virtually no one using that entrance (there is another) at that moment. A Metro employee was standing by at the farecard machines which will accept $1 and $5 bills as well as coins totalling up to $20. It was the first day of mandatory use of the automatic fare collection machines, which had been phased in over the previous two weeks, and it was accompanied by fears of confusion and delay. When there were large crowds, there was some delay, but most people were getting the hang of it quickly. The fact that you can "buy ahead" and skip using the farecard machines each time if you're a regular rider, is an advantage. The card goes into the turnstile at the entrance and again when you leave--and is "confiscated" when used up. You can also add to it before leaving the gate if there's insufficient value left. The system is basically similar to those of BART and Lindenwold.



After waiting a few minutes at the Union Station platform, I boarded an inbound train for the short ride--several stops--to Metro Center where I took the escalator to the lower level Blue Line platform just as a train eased in. The Red Line train was less than half full, but virtually every seat was taken this time as we made the closely-spaced downtown stops before heading under the river. Ears popped as we hit a maximum speed of about 60 and slowed for the Rosslyn stop. Quite a few passengers remained aboard until arrival at the 3-track elevated National Airport station. One other station on the line is not underground--a surface level structure at Arlington Cemetary.

It was obvious that those aboard the Blue Line were a combination of regular patrons and joy riders. The crowds were nothing like the original opening day, when rides were free, but Metro officials expressed pleasure at the turnout.

After a brief layover at the airport to the background music of jet noise, I was back aboard to ride the entire line to RFK Stadium. It took 30 minutes. It should take 25. The difference can be accounted for by minor technical problems. The computer-controlled station stops were overly long in some cases. A couple of times the train stopped short of the proper place on the platform and the doors wouldn't open. After a short delay, the train pulled up a few car lengths and passengers who feared missing their station "escaped." (I heard one rider allude to the Kingston Trio song about the man trapped on the Boston MTA.) All in all, things went reasonably well that first day. Those trying out the system must have found the smooth, quiet ride a pleasant change of pace from the hassle of summertime Washington traffic.

National Airport Metro station on opening day of the Blue Line, July 1. Photo by Ken Maylath.

It is a bit soon to assess the success of this latest segment of Metro. However, the best assumption is an optimistic one. The first segment of the Red Line consistently carried three times the number of projected riders, or near 30,000 daily. Also many bus lines will be re-aligned to encourage and in some cases force a transfer to Metro trains. Key points served, such as the airport, Pentagon, Crystal City office complex, and downtown can be expected to generate considerable business, buses or not.

Walter Addison is head of the Maryland Mass Transit Administration and therefore top man in the Baltimore subway project which is just getting underway and is quite similar in concept to Washington's. As a most interested outside observer he predicts an acceptance of Metro that will knock advance predictions into a cocked hat and spur enthusiasm to complete the entire 100-mile system in spite of escalated costs. He also points out, quite correctly, that the success of Metro will influence government planners and officials in their attitudes toward heavy rail transit systems in other cities.

* * *

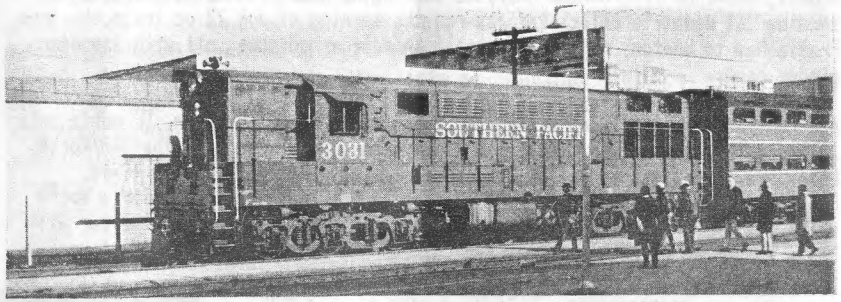
If things went with relative smoothness on Friday's opening day, such was not the case on July 4, when holiday operations were scheduled from noon to midnight to handle the crowds expected for downtown events, including the evening fireworks display. (A major reason for doing this was the huge traffic jam at last year's event, which trapped cars and buses alike for hours after the fireworks.) Several breakdowns and delays caused long waits before and after the fireworks. Some gave up and walked.

OUR LAST ISSUE attempted to dispute the notion that BART has not helped Bay Area traffic. A graphic demonstration of what would happen without BART happened on Friday, Jul 8, when BART train operators staged a one-day strike. The result was a mammoth traffic jam, with cars at the Bay Bridge toll plaza lined up for six miles. The surprise strike involved a dispute over eliminating one of six computer center monitor jobs. Ironically, the $100,000 that BART lost in fares for one day was far more than the salary it would have saved each year by eliminating one position. The Public Utilities Commission criticized the union for inadequate notice before walking out, and BART for trying the manpower experiment without notifying the PUC. BART chief Frank Herringer wrote the Wall Street Journal a letter disputing the contentions of its Jun 29 article (see last issue), which made many of the same points we did last time--"Without (BART) we would either build more highways and bridges, or the San Francisco region could not grow and prosper".

ANOTHER CHICAGO TRANSIT crash occurred the morning of July 17 on the North Side. A work train hit the rear of a passenger train, injuring 19. This time officials cracked down on personnel, suspending two workers pending an investigation.

TWO SHAKER HEIGHTS trolley cars in Cleveland crashed headon at 10:11am on Jul 8. About 45 people were injured when car 59, heading east toward Shaker Heights, was switched to the westbound track because of track repairs in the vicinity of the E. 92nd St. overpass (near a curve known as "dead man's curve). Car 65, heading west toward Terminal Tower, was to wait until #59 passed it before proceeding over the bridge. Due either to a signal malfunction or the lack of a flagman on the scene, #65 did not wait, with a resulting headon collision on the E. 92nd St. bridge at Holton Avenue. One car was traveling at 35mph, the other at 20mph, reports said. Dale Finley, transit chairman, announced creation of a commission headed by Chicago Transit Authority Chairman George Krambles to investigate the accident.

BART HAS WON a three-year-old lawsuit brought against its contractors, Rohr, Westinghouse, and Parsons Brinckerhoff-Tudor-Bechtel, for equipment problems. The $29 million out-of-court settlement was announced July 18. BART also plans to take legal action against the union that brought on the one-day strike of July 8, in which it lost $100,000 in revenues and incurred extra expenses.



THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC was granted July 12 a 25% fare increase on its commute line, to take effect Aug 5. The decision came 3 years after SP had filed for a 96.4% increase. Unsatisfied with the boost, SP on July 19 offered to give $8 million to Santa Clara County Transit District and SamTrans of San Mateo County to buy buses, if the railroad would be allowed to drop its commute runs. Reaction from the transit agencies was negative, as it was from commuters recently when SP offered to buy them vans for highway commuting if they would only go away and leave the railroad alone. PUC hearings on SP's discontinuance application begin Aug 1 at 9:30am at 350 McAllister, San Francisco.

LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT, now experiencing a rebirth in many U.S. cities, will be the topic of a national conference sponsored by the DOT in Boston Aug 28-31. Pre-registration deadline is Aug 19 ($50; or $60 at the door); contact Marilou Damon, Transportation Research Board, 2101 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington DC 20418. Phone 202-389-6335.

HONG KONG GOVERNMENT will expand its subway system, now one-fourth complete, from 10 miles length to 16½ miles, with a new $890 million project.

UNTIL JULY FIFTH, only UMTA headquarters in Washington could approve its grant applications. On that date the first transportation technical studies grant was approved by a regional federal official when a Philadelphia director okayed a $26,000 grant to Lynchburg VA for transportation planning activities.

Urban-Suburban Transit

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY Board on Jul 8 announced unanimous approval of Grand Central Terminal as the site for the proposed East Side Midtown Terminal of the Long Island Rail Road, rather than another proposal to construct a new transportation center in Manhattan at E. 48th Street and Third Avenue. The next step is to seek public funds, about $400 million, for design and construction of the LIRR terminal at GCT. The new terminal is expected to relieve pressure on Penn Station and the old tunnels which lead to it.

NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION of County Transportation Representatives has called upon the President and Congress to offer a tax deduction equal to the cost of using public transportation on the federal income tax, as an incentive to transit use. The Association also called upon the Governor and other state officials to permit use of casino gambling revenue earmarked for the elderly and handicapped, to improve and expand transportation services for them.

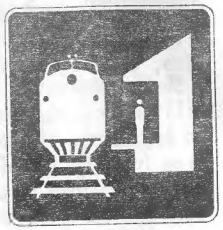
GREYOUND COMMUTER SERVICES on the San Francisco peninsula were taken over by the San Mateo County transit agency, SamTrans July 2. Altho riders showed confusion over schedule changes, the takeover seemedto be going smoothly.

SMOKING WILL BE prohibited on Toronto's GO Transit vehicles starting January 1.

FORMER PENN CENTRAL (NH) engine 7538, a GP-9, arrived in Boston's South Station Jul 21, in its new commuter rail paint scheme: metallic gray body with a lavender stripe that winds around the engine at a level just below the cab window. There are yellow bands on each side of the stripe. Each end is yellow, except for the stripe. A small Circle-T insignia appears in the lavender band just below the window, and under it, on the gray, is the engine number in B&M style using B&M decals. It made its official first run the morning of Jul 22 on train 446 from Framingham to Boston, pulling 3 rebuilt Shoreliner coaches, all with lavender window bands.

A CIRCULATING RUMOR says that some of the recently "retired" CP Budd cars from the Montreal commuter pool might come to Boston's MBTA. However, CP wants only to lease the cars and not sell them. New schedule for Aug 7 on the B&M/North Lines are to reflect reduction in services at off-peak and weekend times.

THE FIAT CAR in Boston comes out of service Jul 22 to be stored for a month while the FIAT rep returns to Italy on vacation. Upon his return the car will leave Boston on Amtrak train 449 for Chicago and service there on a yet-unspecified line.



REASONS FOR POSTPONEMENT of re-electrification of E-L lines in New Jersey include these: cost estimates have risen from $265 to $315 million. Higher costs have forced NJDOT to place a hold on the extension of electrification from Dover to Netcong and station & parking improvements there and at Gladstone. The project involved conversion of 16 electrical substations, rehabilitation of catenary from Hoboken to Dover and Roseville Ave. (Newark) to Montclair, and reconstruction of catenary from Summit to Gladstone. Physical connections with the N.E. Corridor at Kearny & with the Boonton Line at Montclair are not included in this project; thus, no thru operation to Penn Station, NY, will take place. The signal & communications systems will be modernized. No high-level platforms or other station improvements will be constructed. Electric operation with the present equipment will continue until "Cutover Day." New cars for the line (180 in all) have been ordered from GE & delivery has begun; a few have already been accepted. Since they can't be used for some time on the ex-E-L, they are entering service on the NJDOT-subsidized, ConRail-operated commuter services on the ex-NY&LB & ex-PRR routes to South Amboy and Trenton. (Information from Richard F. Begley.)

(continued from page 10)

problems with train crews meant there simply had to be no passengers on the dock unless a few thoughtless people wanted to force most of the passengers to walk a mile to town in Skagway, Alaska to catch the White Pass & Yukon's "Bennett Turn" excursion train, which operates for cruise ship passengers.

Everyone was in good spirits, and after about 40 minutes of waiting, a diminutive, olive-drab narrow gauge passenger train backed slowly to the ship's side. We easily might have been watching "Around the World in 80 Days," but here it was right in front of us. Only the small alligator-style diesels said anything like "1970" to the sight.

The consist of the train was: engines 101 & 108; cars 266 Lake Schwatka, 286 Lake Kusawa, 218 Lake Atlin, 278 Lake Fairweather, 288 Lake McClintock, 234 Lake Cowley, 282 Lake Klukshu, 284 Lake Takhini, 276 Lake Big Salmon, 274 Lake Primrose, and 256 Lake LeBarge.

I took a seat in the rear car. After the conductor took tickets, he indicated that passengers should return to their same car after luncheon at Lake Bennett, but should switch sides--an old tour bus technique used by drivers to keep complaints down about missing scenery. I thus had a good view rear from the "observation" end northbound, and sat directly behind the engines southbound. There are small signs indicating that passengers should not stand on the open platforms, but they are there, apparently, only at the insistence of the legal department. Indeed, the White Pass & Yukon excursion "turns" are very relaxed and easy-going; lots of photos are possible from the open platforms.

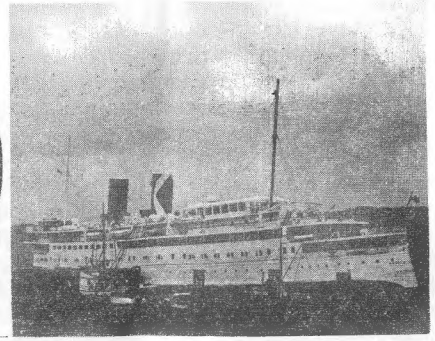
Much has been written about the spectacular White Pass & Yukon route, with its 4% grades north from Skagway. The $29 ride is worth it, and the mass-produced luncheon at Bennett should be filling. There is indeed a "Spell of the Yukon" and the scenery is so lush that it almost compels one to "jump ship" and begin hiking. The cruise ship excursion train runs formerly operated to Carcross, just over the B.C. line in the Yukon Territory. Unfortunately, they tended to be too long for many of the older passengers, and have since been cut back several miles. You can no longer say you've been in "The Yukon." But it may be a smart move. The top speed for narrow gauge operations is 25mph, and progress is slow.

A small oil pipeline runs beside the ties, indicating that WP&Y is into other facets of the transport business. Many new ties near Bennett are standard gauge, but officials say there will be no move to convert from narrow to standard. The wide ties, they indicate, are to better accommodate the heavy ore tonnage from the Anvil Mine in The Yukon en route to the ore docks at Skagway.

With a 9:31am departure from Skagway, our arrival time at Bennett was 11:38am. The return trip departed Bennett at 12:37pm, and arrived at the Skagway depot at about 2:45pm. Passengers returning to the ship directly had complimentary van service. Most, however, remained to browse thru shops which, aside from the railway, are the major source of income for the town's population of 800. Luncheon was served aboard ship for those not making the train tour.

In the afternoon I photographed narrow gauge steam engines, tenders and other equipment being loaded on a barge for U.S. points. These included locos 70 and 71 en route to the Rebel Railway in Gatlinberg TN, and nos. 80 and 81, en route to the Sumpter Valley Rwy restoration project near Baker OR (a stop on the new PIONEER route).

Patricia sailed promptly at 11pm. It was still light, and there would be no darkness tonight. Departure seemed very slow, slightly emotional,



Left: the ship at Alert Bay. Right: The white Pass excursion train at Bennett. Glenn Lee photos.

and a little disheartening, for now we were turning south, and embarked on the downhill side, the return half of our adventure. I stayed up well past midnight, watching the tall peaks and tiny waterfalls slip by.

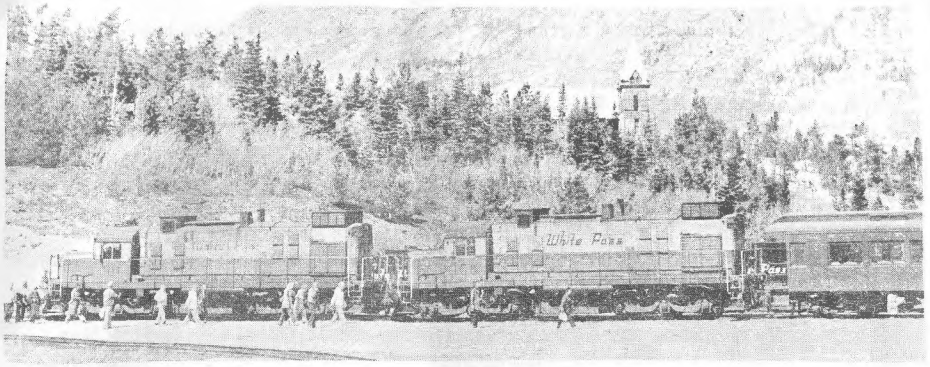
May 28: Juneau, Alaska's capital city, is a bit of busy metropolis set in the north, complete with a freeway. Lots of tourist shops, a few sights to see, and a bus ride to Mendenhall Glacier, maybe 15 miles distant. Worth taking, but somewhat of a comedown after the previous magnificences. It rained a bit, dampening body and spirit together. Departure was at noon, and the usual 14-knot pace quickened to 16 knots or more, for we were hurrying to cruise Tracy Arm while it was bright daylight.

Tracy Arm is a 30-mile fjord, very narrow and very, very deep. On the south side is a large formation resembling El Capitan in Yosemite. It has been named "Josie's Point" for Mrs. Josie Brandner, veteran stewardess. The eastern end of Tracy Arm is marked by two glaciers discharging into salt water. As we proceeded up the twisting, rock-encased channel towards them, ice became increasingly thick, and the ship slowed. By 4:30pm we could go no farther, halted about 4 miles from the glaciers. Very slowly, the ship began a 180° turn, taking 17 minutes to complete. On the September sailings there is usually less ice, so the glaciers can be reached. The day was overcast, increasing the moodiness of the spectacle. The ship moved slowly for a time thru the massive ice blocks, which were capped with white, but glowing a deep, luminescent aqua a few feet below. By 6pm the show was over, and Tracy Arm slid behind us.

The ship picked up speed to make a good tide at Wrangell Narrows, and the hustle ranged to 16 knots or more, requiring firing a third boiler. At 10pm we again passed the Norwegian town of Petersburg. Wrangell Narrows was again a tortured passage, taking about 90 minutes and requiring skillful seamanship. We emerged to the south at 11:25pm, and it was still quite light. After a bit of buffet, I returned to the deck to watch a moon approaching full phase, floating quietly above mountain tops to the south.

May 29: About 9am we encountered once again the pulse of the open Pacific crossing Dixon Entrance, which marks the Alaska-Canada boundary. The sea was calm. Today there was a tour of the engine room. For this, a release slip must be signed, witnessed by someone not a family member. Unlike most cruise ships, which are diesels, Patricia is a very quiet steam-propelled vessel, with no reciprocating machinery. Steam from boilers is fed to two turbines, which drive electric generators, which in turn power two electric drive motors. The crew love this beautiful power plant. One said: "The hull plates will rust thru, and the superstructure will rot away, but this power plant will never wear out."

Arrival at Prince Rupert was 1:58pm, and I took the city bus tour, against my judgment. The narrator's descriptions of the scenery were best described



as banal. I bailed out before the tour ended and walked to the CN passenger depot, where I observed a consist of the "Rupert Rocket," CN 9-10, turning overnight. The Rocket seems to me the logical successor to the YAMPA VALLEY MAIL as prototypical of a passenger train running to remote and beautiful places with few patrons. Cars were: 9484 bag-dorm, 5584 coach, 1346 diner-lounge, and sleeper "Greenwich." The bag-dorm seemed to be an ex-NYC 22-roomette sleeper with 14 roomettes surviving, the rest at one end cut away for baggage space.

Patricia's departure was 4:45pm, and by 6pm we were entering Grenville Channel, the long, straight and narrow passage to the southeast which helps avoid passage in the open sea. Several miles behind us was Alaska ferry "Malaspina," approaching to overtake us. The Captain's dinner was held this evening for both sittings--a dress-up affair enjoyed by almost everyone. It was followed by a masquerade party. At 8:38pm the "Malaspina" lapped us, and Patricia cut speed to let her by. "She has a tight schedule, so we give her a break," said a deck officer. At 11pm we passed into a large "bowl" which is the meeting point of 5 channels--two from inland, two parallel to the sea, and one extending to the sea.

May 30: We entered Queen Charlotte Sound, where we had bounced around so much going north, at 9:30am. Nary a ripple this time, and passengers were thankful. South of Pine Island light, the ship again entered protected waters, with Vancouver Island to the west. The Pine Island light was destroyed in late 1948 when hit by a 70-ft wave from the ocean. The lightkeeper and his wife heard the roar and escaped with only moments to spare. We reached Alert Bay at 1:58pm and departed at 5:03, into rain and a southeast wind. The day died slowly, as passengers faced up to the reluctant fact that tomorrow morning meant the end of the fun.

May 31: A cold rain fell as Patricia docked at 8:50am at Pier B. We had been warned that departure from the ship would be delayed about a half-hour. No one minded. I was tired, and slept most of the day in Vancouver, to make up for an average of 6hrs per night sleep during the voyage. I returned in the evening to see Patricia load for her next trip--more happy people who looked a lot like those I had traveled with. (About a third of the passengers come from California, a third from Ontario, mainly Toronto, and the rest from everywhere else; capacity is 347 passengers.) At a nearby berth was the "Island Princess," a P&O ship that was a so-called "luxury ship" which appeared to lack only Liberace or Dean Martin leering at the passengers. There was no comparison. One was Las Vegas afloat, the other a seagoing version of the CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR or SHASTA DAYLIGHT.

For those of us who have loved the great dome trains, it is only a matter of time until we, all of us, sail aboard Patricia. My advice is: don't waste a moment. Begin planning for it now. There will be no regrets.

THE CN TRAINS from Thunder Bay North to Winnipeg, nos. 686-7, have been ordered continued until July 31. CN had dropped six miles of the run until complaints by citizen group Transport 2000 led to their restoration into downtown Winnipeg. The Minnesota Association of RR Passengers has appealed to the state Dept. of Transportation to "investigate and stop the proposed discontinuance", since the train passes thru Lake of the Woods and Roseau counties via Bandette, Roosevelt, Williams and Wairoad, Minnesota. Persons wishing to add their voices to that of Minn ARP can write: Mr. Jim Harrington, Commissioner, Minnesota Dept. of Transportation, Transportation Building, St. Paul MN 55155. A copy could be sent to Minn ARP, 2710 Monterey Ave. So., Minneapolis MN 55416. Transport 2000 believes that a possibility of saving the trains exists if Minn ARP exercises its jurisdiction. Several communities on the line have no other public transportation.

Rail Canada

VIA RAIL CANADA'S President J. Frank Roberts has indicated in a letter to the Saskatchewan Rail Committee that "our position is that a rail passenger terminal should be located as close to the city center as possible and any proposed relocation of terminals presently located at the city core should be seriously questioned if the city is to form part of the rail passenger network." The statement came in response to complaints that depot relocations in Saskatoon, Ottawa and Quebec City had adversely affected rail patronage. A market study showed projected ridership losses of 25-50% on important routes if terminals were located in inconvenient places.

TRANSPORT MINISTER LANG'S deal with four Maritime Provinces to drop most train service in return for improved bus and air transportation appears now to be off, according to Locomotive Engineer. CTC hearings in the Maritimes have now been completed, and a summary report is being prepared. In the course of the public hearings, every single organization appearing strongly criticized the deal, attempted to be made outside the CTC's jurisdiction, and government representatives from the provinces quickly dropped their support of the plan, which seems to have backfired badly. In addition, Lang was attacked in the House of Commons over the matter, which had called for dropping all rail passenger service except a single daily Montreal-Halifax train.

GENERAL JACQUES DEXTRAZE, now chief of the defence staff, will take over as Board Chairman of CN Railways on Sept 1. The 58-year-old French-Canadian, described as a strong Federalist, is said to believe in the power of transportation, including railroads, to foster national unity. He is described as an aggressive and effective military man who is accustomed to being obeyed, and it is said that he may not readily accept the "user-pay" concept promoted by Transport Minister Lang and CN President Robert Bandeen.

TEN POSSIBLE PLANS for relocation of CP Rail's downtown line and station in Edmonton have been proposed, and will be narrowed down to one by next fall, when an application to approve the project will be submitted to the CTC.

REVISED TRANSCONTINENTAL SERVICE could start as early as October if the CTC's final plan is ready by then--if not, next spring. VIA Rail Canada President Roberts said he wants to create regional advisory councils of interested rail passenger promoters who would pass along ideas to regional Vice Presidents.

THE SINKING OF the ferry "William Carson" on June 3 will be the subject of a 2-week investigation in St. John's, Newfoundland, starting July 26.

THE METRO COUNCIL of Toronto on June 28 approved construction of a high-speed streetcar line from the eastern end of the Bloor-Danforth subway to Scarborough.

TWO LOCOMOTIVES AND six cars of the CANADIAN derailed west of Thunder Bay July 4 after hitting a motorized truck moving slowly on the tracks. There were 8 injuries reported. The lead engine caught fire and burned. Five cars remained on the track. The westbound train was 4 hours late at the time due to a derailment in the area earlier that day.

Mixed Train of Thoughts

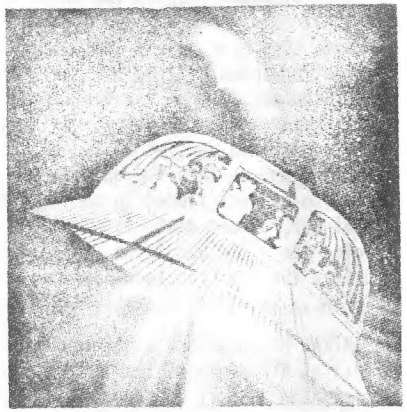
NO DEFINITE DATE has yet been set for acceptance of the new Amtrak bi-level cars, but October or November is expected to see the first operation of them, on the EMPIRE BUILDER. Possibly before Labor Day an official ceremony of acceptance will be held at the Pullman-Standard factory..... AMTRAK'S NEW LAKEFRONT Cleveland station was dedicated on Jul 12, with about 300 persons in attendance. A new Amtrak flag, bearing the corporation's logo and the word "Amtrak" will fly over the station, alongside the American flag..... BOARD OF DIRECTORS of Amtrak will consider in part the following agenda at the July 27 meeting: the Omaha station; Oakland-Sacramento capital improvements; equipment retirements; election of board and corporate officers; status of the FLORIDIAN; and on-board management agreements..... THE OAKLAND-SACRAMENTO (CA) train will be named the SACRAMENTAN (the name SENATOR was wanted initially, but that name is already used for a N.E. Corridor train), and is expected to begin operation on Oct 30. A date in mid-August was earlier chosen, but informants indicate that the SP refused to operate the train until the Richmond Amtrak station was fully completed. The schedule is as follows: bus lv San Francisco 7:05am; train lv Oakland 7:30am, ar Sacramento 9:28am with stops at Richmond, Martinez, Suisun-Fairfield (not served since 1971), and Davis. The train will lv Sacramento at 4pm and ar Oakland at 6:28pm, with bus connection ar San Francisco at 6:50pm. One news report indicates that the train will use the SAN JOAQUIN's Amfleet equipment, tying into the SAN JOAQUIN's schedule (which train will be re-scheduled) in some way that Amtrak has not yet verified. (One arrangement considered earlier by Amtrak was to extend to SAN JOAQUIN to Sacramento by leaving Oakland earlier in the morning and running to Sacramento, then to Stockton and on into the San Joaquin Valley.) The run will be a 3-year demonstration project funded in part by the state of California, which will pay about $45,000 per month to support the service..... IN OTHER NEWS from California, the state Senate on Jun 22 approved legislation to provide $3 million to restore the San Francisco-Monterey DEL MONTE and the San Jose-Santa Cruz SUNTAN SPECIAL. The state Assembly will consider the bill in August.....

* * *

AMTRAK HAS DESIGNED a new brushless passenger car washer which it will install first at Albany-Rensselaer NY. Eliminating brushes reduces exterior window scratching as well as replacement expense for the brushes, and the machine can clean car tops, which other washers failed to do. It uses jets of water and chemical cleaners aimed at the cars in precisely the proper manner--with a different spray pattern for each type of car. Amtrak began work on the design in August 1975..... NIGHT OWL FARES have nothing to do with the train of that name, but instead are a promotional device of Amtrak's, effective Jun 15-Aug 15, to encourage travel to and from towns that have service in the wee hours of the night--such as Erie PA and Bismarck ND. It offers a round trip for just $1 more than the one-way ride. It applies to coach travel, but tickets can be upgraded to sleeper class. There are certain other restrictions..... NEW AMTRAK UNIFORMS will be introduced for all on-board service attendants along with the introduction of the bi-level cars late this year..... THE PUSH TO prevent Amtrak from discontinuing the FLORIDIAN has begun. The Miami Herald editorialized (Jul 4) that "Deficit to the contrary, it makes no sense for Amtrak to discontinue the FLORIDIAN. It makes plenty of sense, on the other hand, to improve the route by such oft-suggested moves as running it thru Atlanta instead of Montgomery and Birmingham and to improve the service which at times is so bad as to prompt suspicion that it is part of a plot for discontinuance." The Savannah Chamber of Commerce wants to petition Amtrak to re-route the train thru Chattanooga, Atlanta, Macon and Savannah. The Orlando Sentinel Star (Jul 7) called Amtrak's rea-

soning about the train "a remarkable display of circuitous logic." The Daytona Beach Morning Journal editorialized (Jul 6) that the plan "is a bad and backward looking idea." A number of RTN readers have written to us, to Amtrak and to public officials about the discontinuance plan. In other FLORIDIAN news, Auto-Train has begun offering customers a fly-to-Florida plan with their autos carried separately via rail, arriving shortly after they do. The rumor mill has it that Auto-Train may be moving toward getting out of the passenger-carrying business entirely. (The Louisville-Florida AUTO-TRAIN is presently combined with Amtrak's FLORIDIAN)..... THE SOUTHWEST LIMITED derailed four cars near Las Vegas NM on Jul 15. The cars were left in Las Vegas and the train was running about 5 hours late. The BLACKHAWK, train 371, hit a semi-truck truck trailer loaded with steel and auto parts at the Genoa Road crossing east of Rockford IL at 6:37pm on Jun 24. There were 5 minor injuries, including the truck driver's. The train consist with damage estimates is: engine 439 $5000, car 8401 $10,000, car 6046 $10,000, and car 5801 $10,000. About 1000 feet of track were torn up. engine 439 is an E unit with Amtrak's new striped paint job. The train was traveling about 60mph when it struck the truck, which reportedly ignored crossing flashers and tried to beat the train. All 3 cars and the engine's rear wheels derailed. Passengers were bused to their destinations.....

WHAT FUTURISTIC VEHICLE is this? Reader Dave Arthur saw this illustration in an ad for the recorded soundtrack of the popular new science fiction movie "Star Wars" in a Yorba Linda CA record store. "It really blew me away" says Dave. "Can you imagine a 1949 CZ Budd dome car passing for a futuristic spacecraft? The designers at Budd were really ahead of their time!"..... AMTRAK IS SEARCHING for ways to economize, aside from discontinuing the FLORIDIAN. Reportedly the dome lounge was removed from the SOUTHWEST LIMITED on Jul 15, and the NY-L.A. thru car will be discontinued at the end of July. There are other cutbacks in crew. Amtrak's budget is being cut by Congress (see last issue) and the corporation lost revenue last winter with the SDP40F and cold weather disasters.....



SPEAKING OF WEATHER, the extreme heat wave that hit the Eastern part of the country this month caused the temporary discontinuance of the WOLVERINE due to heat buckling the tracks, one report indicates..... THE RUMOR MILL comes up with more Amtrak economy possibilities. One is a rumored cutback of the EMPIRE BUILDER to 4 days per week next fall to allow Amtrak to run both it and the NORTH COAST HIAWATHA with fewer cars overall, presumably after the bi-levels arrive..... THE LAST RAILWAY post office car in America ran on Jun 30 (operated by ConRail, not Amtrak). Consist of the last train 4 was: Amtrak GG-1 #901 (black); cars PC 7520, PRR 9046, PC 6599, PC 6598, and Atk 3925. NY-DC trains 3 & 4, an overnight operation, were the last operating RPOs in the U.S. More than 100 years of RPO service ended with the demise of the two. The Postal Service said it would save $1 million yearly by eliminating the trains, which were owned by Amtrak but operated, as is Corridor freight, by ConRail. The first RPO service was operated by the North Western in 1864 between Chicago and Clinton IA. At its height in the 1930s and 1940s, RPO service counted about 1500 routes in the U.S., and workers on them regarded themselves as the highest-status postal employees. Trains 3 & 4 will be replaced by one train and two highway trips in each direction daily.....

THE NUMBERING SCHEME for Amtrak's new bi-level cars is as follows:

car numbers	quantity	type of car
31000-31047	48	78-seat coach/baggage
32000-32069	70	44-bed sleeper
33000-33024	25	99-seat lounbe/cafe
34000-34099	100	77-seat coach
35000-35101	102	77-seat coach
38000-38038	39	72-seat diner

BESIDES THE AMFLEET car to be scrapped, pictured last issue, four other Amfleet cars were damaged previously. Cafe car 20022 burned in NY's Sunnyside Yards during the winter and is now stored at Beech Grove. Cars 20043 (cafe), and 21167 & 21172 (coaches) are also listed as wrecked and out of revenue service. Studying the pattern of damage further on car 21173, photographer Glenn Lee theorizes that the vestibule damage may have been caused by the rear of the cement truck hitting the car on rebound, spinning around when it struck the train..... MEMORIAL SERVICES WERE held aboard the Washington State ferry "Klahowya" July 6 en route from West Seattle to Vashon Island for Capt. David Moon, missing when a small freighter "Ahaliq" sank June 28 near Southwest Alaska. Moon was a brother-in-law of RTN contributor Glenn Lee. He had served at sea for 27 years and had been a deck officer for Washington State Ferries 1967-1973..... WHERE ARE THE ex-Milwaukee Road full-length domes? asks a reader. These are cars 9380-9383. At least one of them, car 9383, has been running on the SOUTHWEST LIMITED. It was seen on train 3 July 2 and train 4 July 10, both sightings at Kansas City...

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AMTRAK'S BOARD OF Directors on June 29 elected Norman M. Lorentzsen, President of BN, as one of the three reps of the corporation's common stockholders. He succeeds Robert W. Downing, former vice chairman and chief operating officer of BN, who resigned at the May Board meeting. Amtrak has appointed George F. Daniels as VP-Labor Relations, effective June 15. He was previously labor relations official for ConRail..... THE NORTHEAST CORRIDOR will get concrete ties in the NY-Boston segment. Transportation Secretary Adams made the decision this month, one of several designed to speed up the rebuilding work to get it completed by early 1981. Adams will decide shortly on what system of electrification to use, and has ordered further study of where to locate a new heavy maintenance facility for Amtrak. The concrete ties will be used only where passenger trains will be traveling 120mph, with wooden ties used elsewhere. Installation is to begin next spring. Adams also cut out $500 million of Corridor improvements because of lack of funds. These include the widening of the Baltimore tunnel (the focus of a derailment a few months ago that seriously disrupted Corridor operations) and the improvement of some curves for passenger comfort that would not affect train speed. A project to bridge over some tracks in New Rochelle NY has also been dropped. Completing the engineering survey of the Corridor, FRA administrator John Sullivan was to activate a laser beam from the 81st floor of the Empire State Building on July 8 at 11am. The location is a fixed control point in a national network of geodetic locations that is considered one of the most accurate in the world. A Pittsfield MA Congressman, Silvio O. Conte, successfully lobbied before a joint Congressional Transportation Committee for funds to replace the 12 missing miles of track on the LAKE SHORE LIMITED route, and argued that ConRail should use concrete ties in that segment as a demonstration project..... GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL has been saved. The NY Supreme Court late in June ruled that the landmark station must be preserved without Penn Central's proposed highrise office building on it.....

AMTRAK RESERVATIONS CLERKS walked off their jobs for two hours at the L.A. bureau on June 21 in a dispute over hiring practices. Calls from 16 Western states and British Columbia were disrupted during that time..... AMTRAK'S LAST AMCOACH, #21270, rolled off the Budd assembly line on June 9, 3 weeks ahead of schedule.....

DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION swore in Robert E. Gallamore, a Nebraska management economist, as Deputy Administrator in the FRA on July 19, and John M. Sullivan, business executive and former Navy officer, as Administrator on July 5. Richard S. Page, former executive director of the Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle (which includes its Metro system) as Administrator of UMTA on July 11.....

THE MISSOURI PACIFIC may be sued by Amtrak for operating the INTER-AMERICAN behind schedule so frequently. In 25% of trips between Mar 2 and Jul 2, the train was so late that passengers had to be bused from St. Louis to Chicago. Local observers say the train is frequently sidetracked for freights, in violation of federal law..... A FEDERAL JUDGE issued an order stopping the closure of St. Louis Union Station that would have occurred Jul 15 when a lease expired.....

GROUP FARE REDUCTIONS will be allowed in sleepers, and not only in coaches, starting Sep 1, Amtrak announced this month. This will allow tour operators to give reductions in sleeper fares..... AMTRAK'S BOARD AUTHORIZED late in June an investment of $1.2 million to improve its ARTS automated reservations system, to save $570,000 annually..... A PUBLIC MEETING concerning service on the NATIONAL between Columbus and Indianapolis will be held Aug 1 at 9:30am in Dayton OH, at room 901, county administration bu8lding, 451 W. 3rd Street..... DEPT. OF CORRECTIONS: last issue we mentioned "some 75mph on ConRail in Eastern Virginia." That should read "in Eastern NY State."..... SOVIET RR OFFICIALS toured various locomotive facilities in the U.S. Jul 5-17, accompanied by FRA officials.....

THE WASHINGTON STAR (Jul 15) reports on an investigation of ICC Secretary Robert L. Oswald that is probing for possible mob influence at the regulatory agency. A major piece of evidence in the investigation is a diary kept by Oswald's former aide, Bruce Gordon, who is now with Amtrak's Government Affairs Dept..... THE NEW "PIONEER" will offer both unreserved and reserved seat space effective Jul 15. It will carry one coach that is completely reserved. Besides the former Milwaukee Road PIONEER LTD, reader Gil Hulin found that the MoPac had a train named THE PIONEER, trains 315-316, listed in the Jul 1958 Guide.....

THE FIRST F40 engine rebuilt from an SDP40F is expected to be delivered Jul 23. The new engines will be numbered from 230 up. In June, the following SDP's were sent for rebuilding: 562, 563, 564, 566, 567, 571. The July set is 520, 580, 585, 576, 589, and 594..... PRESIDENT AL CHESSER of the UTU on Jul 8 called for nationalization of U.S. railroads..... AMTRAK BEGAN AN extensive HILLTOPPER ad campaign this month..... USA RAIL PASS prices will drop Sep 1: 14 days $185, 21 days $250, 30 days $295..... NEW NATIONWIDE TIMETABLE dated Jun 22, with brown & black cover, has appeared (we haven't seen it yet). Has same format as previous, May 1 issue..... THE SAN DIEGANS in preliminary June figures showed a 61% increase in ridership over June 1976..... THE SENATE APPROVED $5.8 billion for mass transit, over Administration objections..... Mailing date: July 27.

RAIL FANTRIPS

Jul 30 & 31: Dixie Limited steam excursions Richmond-Keysville VA, RT lv 8:45am, return 6pm. $18.95, kids $14.95, picnic dinner $3. Old Dominion Chapter NRHS, Box 8583, Richmond VA 23226. Must obtain tickets in advance.

Oct 28-Nov 6: El Corazon de Mexico Special train L.A.-Veracruz, daylight ride on Mexicano "Rwy Trip of 1000 Wonders" & Barrancas "Sierra Nayarit" Tepic-Guadalajara. U.S. slprs, diner with U.S. food. $495 up. Info: Pacific RR Society, Box 70, East Irvine CA 92650, or Bay Area Electric RR Ass'n, Box 3694, San Francisco.

Aug 20, 21, 27: Piedmont Limited/610 steam excursions Alexandria-Monroe VA, lv 8 am, return 7pm. $20, kids $18, Box lunch $2. Info: Piedmont Limited/610, Box 456, Laurel MD 20810. Stops at Manassas and Charlottesville.

Aug 6: Chicago-Garrett IN Chessie steam special RT; Aug 7: Chicago-Cincinnati same one-way. Aug 6 $20, kids $18, parlor or obs $50; Aug 7 $18, kids $16. Steam Special, Ill. Rwy Museum, Box 431, Union, McHenry County, IL 60180.

One special Fantrips listing is free, subject to our editing. Send full info to: Rail Travel News, Fantrips Dept, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

Express Ads

RAIL FANS ONLY! It's easy to secure your AMTRAK & CN reservations and tickets (or USA Rail Pass)--from anywhere in the world. Tickets by mail from GREAT WESTERN TOURS, 639 Market St., San Francisco 94105, or call (415) 398-2994.

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20th Century Hobbies, 1034 College Ave, Wheaton IL 60187. 312-682-4460. HO and N scale and accessories. Railroadiana also available.

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STEAM'S STILL SUPREME in Niagara Falls! Savor 6060, then shop at the IRON HORSE Gifts & Souvenirs in the CN Depot. Mention this ad for a 10% DISCOUNT.

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Will send 3 good N&W or Sou diesel color slides my choice for each good private or business car color slide. Will return any not wanted. O.H. Borsum, 426 Woodland Circle, Lynchburg, VA 24502.

MISS THE 4449? Hear it again on 90 min. of stereo cassette tape. Runbys, pacing, stops, starts. Recorded in Utah, Or, Wash, NM, Tex, Ark, Ala, SC, Ga, FL. $5 postpaid. Robert Clark, 1605 W. 25 St. #709, Sanford FL 32771.

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RTN ADVERTISING RATES: Express Ads $1.00 per line of 80 spaces. Display Ads (camera-ready) $25 per half-page (maximum size--4x5 inches); smaller sizes are priced proportionately. Write to: MESSAGE MEDIA, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"'I took this (COAST STARLIGHT) trip, my first on a railroad, because I wanted to see if the train was as exciting as the one in the movie "Silver Streak",' said one young woman with long flowing hair. 'The movie was right. Trains are exciting.' Russ Alexander, 26, a shipbuilder from Portland, said it was his first trip, too. 'It won't be my last either,' he said. 'Man, it feels so good to get away from the automobile.'"

--William Moore in San Francisco Chronicle, Jul 20.

Watch these pages for announcement of the appearance soon of RTN's long-delayed first Rail Travel Yearbook. Thank you!